

Unfortunately, there is one concept contained in this legislation which I oppose. The Veterans Tobacco Trust fund, contained in section 203 of the bill, requires that a certain percentage of any proceeds recovered from tobacco manufacturers, as a result of a U.S. Government lawsuit, be transferred to a special account within the Treasury to treat smoking-related illnesses for veterans. While I support the Federal Government providing adequate resources to the VA to combat and treat smoking-related or any other illnesses, this language legitimizes Federal lawsuits against tobacco companies. That is wrong.

As we saw yesterday, the Justice Department finally unleashed its forces on tobacco by filing a suit in U.S. court, seeking to recover billions in health-related costs to the government. The administration is proceeding with a politically motivated, and legally suspect, attack on a private industry that manufactures and sells legal products. If successful, this action will further damage the farm economies of Kentucky and other States.

I believe it is hypocritical for the Department to propose spending millions of taxpayer dollars trying to develop a legal basis for yet another lawsuit. After all, the Federal Government has earned billions of dollars on the sale of tobacco, through Federal excise taxes, and warned the public about the risks of smoking through labels for decades. It also is hypocritical for this body to pass an appropriations bill that denies funding for a tobacco lawsuit, to then turn around and set up a trust fund in anticipation of receiving proceeds from one.

Section 203 is unnecessary for achieving the objective of improving veterans' health care. It also can be interpreted to implicitly encourage civil actions by the Federal Government made against private industries, including, but not limited to, tobacco related products.

I hope that during the further consideration of H.R. 2116, the House and the other body will agree to omit section 203 from the bill.

TRIBUTE TO A HERO: JASON
SHRADER

HON. TILLIE K. FOWLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 24, 1999

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this moment to honor a young man in my district. Last year, one of my constituents in Ormond Beach, Florida, risked his own life to save another man's life.

Jason Shrader was only 15 years old in May 1998 and just a freshman at Seabreeze High School when he rescued 40 year old Edward Skelton from drowning. Skelton and his girlfriend had gone swimming at the Division Avenue shell pit, a popular swimming hole, when he blacked out and went under. Jason, who was sitting on the shore with his friends, did not think twice before he dove in to search for Skelton.

As Jason himself so movingly described it, "I was scared that either I was going to die trying to save him or he was going to die before I could get him to safety. I grabbed his

foot and pulled him to the surface. He had turned blue from lack of oxygen, the cold water, and being at a depth of fifteen feet of water."

Fortunately for Mr. Skelton, Jason is a Boy Scout—an experience that taught him how to perform CPR, and allowed him to keep Mr. Skelton alive until paramedics arrived.

Too often we are too busy with our own lives to think about the people around us whom we may not know. Jason's selfless and heroic action reminds us that sometimes it is important to get involved and to do something. As the Bible says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Jason is truly a role model for all of us and I commend him for his courage and bravery in the face of such a frightening and dangerous situation. The Coast Guard has issued a special award to recognize Jason's actions, awarding him the Meritorious Public Service Award. I wish to add my congratulations and applause for Jason Shrader, as he represents the definition of a true hero.

HONORING KSEE 24 HISPANIC-
AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH
HONOREES

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 24, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Hon. Jane Cardoza, Pilar De La Cruz, Gabriel Escalera, Frank C. Franco, and Dr. Cecilio Orozco for being selected as the 1999 Portraits of Success program honorees by KSEE 24 and Companies that Care. In celebration Hispanic-American Heritage Month for September, these five leaders were honored for their unique contributions to the betterment of their community.

KSEE 24 and Companies that Care launched the 1999 Portraits of Success program to honor five distinguished local leaders in celebration of Hispanic-American Heritage month. Currently in its fifth year, this special project combines specially produced public service announcements, a five-part news series, plus an awards luncheon to publicly recognize the unique contributions of the Hon. Jane Cardoza, Pilar de la Cruz, Gabriel Escalera, Frank C. Franco and Dr. Cecilio Orozco.

Since graduating from law school in 1981, Judge Cardoza started her law career in the Fresno County District Attorney's office, proceeding to the offices of the Fresno City Attorney and State Attorney General, Fresno County Municipal Court and now is the Presiding Judge of Family Law for the Fresno County Superior Court. She is active in the San Joaquin College of Law Board of Trustees, the Fresno Metropolitan Museum Board of Trustees, Fresno Metropolitan Rotary, Fresno City College Puente Project Mentoring Program and Domestic Violence Roundtable.

Pilar de la Cruz began her nursing career in 1969 at Fresno Community Hospital and has moved up the corporate ladder to become vice-president of Education Department at

Fresno Community. She has been instrumental in the development of the Jefferson Job Institute, a program to provide training for parents of school children for entry-level jobs in hospital settings. Ms. De la Cruz was named 1998 Volunteer of the Year by the American Health Association and 1997 RN of the Year by the Central Valley Coalition of Nursing Organizations. She received the Latina Beyond Boundaries Award in Healthcare for 1998.

Gabriel Escalera has been in the field of education for 27 years, as principal of Alta Sierra Intermediate School for five years and is the principal of Gateway High School. His college major was physical education; played football for San Diego State and was an athletic director and coached football and wrestling for 12 years. Mr. Escalera is president of the Fresno chapter of the Association of Mexican-American Educators and is also president of the Fresno chapter of ACSA. He is a member of the Latino Educational Issues Roundtable and numerous professional and service organizations.

Mr. Franco is Business Development Manager for the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission and has been with the Commission for 16 years. He is Chairperson of the Board of the Metropolitan Flood Control District which is instrumental in developing new parks, is past president and board member of Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Franco enjoys working for the benefit of children and serves as a board member for Genesis, Inc., a group home for girls that also provides substance abuse counseling for women.

Dr. Orozco is Professor Emeritus at CSUF's School of Education. In 1980 in Utah he discovered the origins of the Nahaatl people, the ancestors of the Anasazi and Aztecs, and has repeatedly visited the sites. One of his proudest accomplishments was proposing the name of Miguel Hidalgo Elementary School which was the first school in Fresno to be named for a Hispanic, and this effort was partially responsible for his receiving the National Association for Bilingual Education's "Pioneer In Bilingual Education Medal" in 1997. Dr. Orozco published a book explaining the details of the Sun Stone of the Mexicas and the Aztec Calendar and in 1998 published (in Spanish) the essence of his research on the work of Lic. Alfonso Rivas Salmon which dealt with the origins of the Nahuatl people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the contributions of Judge Jane Cardoza, Pilar De La Cruz, RN, Gabriel Escalera, Frank C. Franco, and Dr. Cecilio Orozco for the month of September, Hispanic-American Heritage Month. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing these honorees many more years of continued success.

H.R. 2684, VA-HUD
APPROPRIATIONS

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 24, 1999

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, it is our duty to fulfill our promises to our nation's veterans,

the men and women who have put themselves in harm's way in service to their country. It is our duty to care for our veterans, and if we pass this legislation, we will fail miserably.

We are faced today with a bill that fails to deliver to our veterans the funding they so desperately need. If we pass this bill, we will only be perpetuating the failure of the President's severely lacking budget. Even though this bill would provide \$1.7 billion more than the President's request, it is still not nearly enough. Two wrongs do not make a right, and if we pass this legislation our veterans will be wronged yet again, by Congress as well as the Administration.

The Republican leadership would have you believe that the Independent Budget submitted by the veterans themselves is bloated and overstates the funding needs for veterans programs. I reject this assertion completely and am horrified that the Republicans are alleging double-counting and padding of budget estimates by respected veterans' groups such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

As if these allegations were not enough, the Republican leadership is now touting this anemic bill as a cause for celebration and criticizing veterans for "complaining" when they fail to celebrate over a bill that is lacking over one billion in critically needed funds. The Republicans have resorted to these tactics against veterans who fought to preserve the prosperity of this country—the prosperity in which veterans will not share if this bill is passed. These accusations are a slap in the face to our veterans and add insult to injury.

As a strong supporter of our nation's veterans, I am forced today to vote against this bill due to its severe lack of funding for veterans' programs. Veterans groups agree that this bill falls short by at least \$1.1 billion. In light of projected budget surpluses and an irresponsible trillion dollar tax cut, it is especially disappointing to see the men and women who have served this country overlooked by those who would rather squander the surplus recklessly than use it to secure the future of critical programs such as veterans benefits and Social Security and reduction of our growing national debt.

Our veterans are aging, and their medical needs are growing as a result. This bill, however, does not address those needs. The number of VA medical facilities has decreased almost 35% in the last ten years, but this bill fails to address the growing demand for VA services as a result of the increasing number of veterans over the age of 65. According to the Congressional Research Service, 36% of all veterans are over the age of 65, and that number is expected to increase exponentially over the next eight years. An aging veterans population will undoubtedly put a strain on our nation's Veterans Health Services. At the current pace of construction, we will not have the necessary facilities to meet veterans' extended care needs.

Faced with this reality, I am unable to vote for a bill that will short-change veterans by over a billion dollars while Republicans insist on robbing Social Security and sacrificing veterans' healthcare, in favor of squandering the surplus on fiscally irresponsible tax cuts.

CELEBRATING THE CITY OF PALOS VERDES ESTATES

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 24, 1999

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Palos Verdes Estates. Palos Verdes Estates is currently celebrating its 60th year as an incorporated city. Situated along the Pacific coastline, the City of Palos Verdes Estates is a spacious community that has changed little since its establishment.

Incorporated December 20, 1939, Palos Verdes Estates is the oldest of the four cities on the Palos Verdes Peninsula. The land was first developed in the early 1920's by Frank A. Vanderlip, a wealthy New York City financier. Vanderlip envisioned a coastal community that preserved and highlighted its natural resources, one that blended in with the surrounding environment. He commissioned the Olmsted Brothers, the sons of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., who designed Central Park in New York City, to lay out and develop the community.

The great care and pains that they took in designing the community are still apparent today. They set aside 28 percent of the land to be permanent open space. In today's age of environmental awareness, the need for open space has become more prevalent. Vanderlip and the Olmsted Brothers recognized the value of natural resources and had the foresight and vision to preserve the land for future generations to enjoy.

Palos Verdes Estates has thrived over the last 60 years, and as we enter the 21st century, Palos Verdes Estates will continue to be the unique, scenic community of the South Bay. I congratulate the City of Palos Verdes Estates and its residents on this milestone.

MIN MATHESON HONORED

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 24, 1999

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to bring the remarkable life of Mrs. Min Matheson to the attention of my colleagues. On September 24, the people of the Wyoming Valley will pay a long overdue tribute to Min, as a historical marker is dedicated to her on the Public Square in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. I am pleased and proud to join in this historic tribute.

One of eight children, Min Lurye was born in Chicago in 1909. Her father, a Jewish immigrant, was a cigar maker and a militant labor leader. Min grew up in a household of radical labor meetings, with her father organizing rallies and strikes within the cigar industry. Max Lurye fought organized crime and big business at the same time, once even having a confrontation with Al Capone. Min's childhood occurred in an atmosphere of violence and fear in the labor movements as her father saw

some of close friends killed for resisting mob control of the industry. Max's legacy was continued by both his daughter Min and son Will, who also dedicated his life to labor causes.

When she was nineteen, Min met and fell in love with Bill Matheson. Defying the convention of the time, they set up a household together without marrying. At Bill's urging, Min traveled to New Jersey to help striking textile workers, but the strike was crushed after six months and Min was uncertain of her next move. They soon moved to New York City and began careers in the garment industry. Min worked in a dress factory until Bill accepted a position in Pennsylvania with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU). When they decided to have children, they married and Min stayed out of union affairs for a time to raise her two small children.

In 1944, the New York ILGWU asked Bill and Min to move to Northeastern Pennsylvania, where dozens of small garment factories were sprouting up. Union officials asked Min and Bill "to clean up the mess down there," and within a few years, Min was General Manager of the Wyoming Valley ILGWU and Bill was the Director of Education.

During strikes, she walked the picket lines with the rank and file and stood her ground when confronted by factory bosses. Eventually, Min realized the press was a union's best friend and regularly used radio shows to bring the union's case to the attention of the public. She organized union blood drives and the union locals gave freely to the United Fund. The community began to accept and appreciate the good works of the ILGWU. At one point, Min realized the union needed to become more active in the political arena and began the strong relationship between labor and the Democratic Party in Northeastern Pennsylvania which still exists to this day.

Mr. Speaker, Min and Bill Matheson were the parents of the garment industry workforce in Northeastern Pennsylvania. They organized it, fought for it, and gave it standing in the community. Seven hundred people turned out at a farewell salute after Min and Bill accepted a transfer to New York in 1963.

Min and Bill chose to come back to the Wyoming Valley upon retirement. They moved back in 1972, a few months before the Susquehanna river overflowed her banks, flooding the entire area and devastating the lives of tens of thousands of area residents. An organizer by birthright, Min immediately helped to organize the Flood Victims Action Council to speak for those devastated by the disaster. She brought her concerns and plight of the flood victims to the immediate attention of the federal government and worked closely with then-Congressman Dan Flood to insure relief for the thousands of displaced residents. I am proud to have worked closely with Min on that effort, acting as legal counsel to the Flood Victims Action Council. Even in retirement, Min Matheson had found a way to better the lives of her neighbors in the Wyoming Valley. She continued to contribute her time and energy to our community until her death several years ago. Then-Wilkes-Barre City Councilman Joe Williams said it best: "There should be a statue of Min on Public Square for all that she has done for this Valley."